Discontinuity and Continuity of Devotion The Virgin of Guadalupe from Mexico to Makati

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Abstract

This paper echoes the question of Horacio de la Costa in the talk that he gave in 1968: "What is the meaning of Makati?" The talk intended to guide the development of the Business District by the principles of Catholic social teaching. This paper tries to provide a path to ascertain the meaning of Makati by contextualizing it within two barangays: Guadalupe Viejo and Guadalupe Nuevo. The paper performs a philosophical understanding of a city by situating it within the history of religions and the philosophy of religion. In the first part, it rehearses the history of devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe in Spain and Mexico, and how it impacted the production of space in Makati. The second

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part treats the devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe in relation to Mexican intellectual history. Here, the paper demonstrates that the devotion has spawned at least three intellectual questions: namely, its relationship with Medieval Theology, Mexican national identity, and the objectives of scientific historicity. The meaning of Makati is irreducible to its economic aims, and is inseparable from religious and intellectual inquiry.

Keywords: *Makati, Guadalupe, history of religions, philosophy of religion, urban studies*

> *"Inspirado por Dios, el chino invoco en el momento a S. Nicolas y al instante el caiman se convirtio en piedra. Los antiguos refieren que en sutiempo se podia reconocer muy bien al monstruo en los trozos de roca que de el quedaron; por mi puedo asegurar que todavia dintingui claramente la cabeza y a juzgar por ella el monstruo debio haber sido enorme."* [1]
>
> —*Jose Rizal*

> *"Firstly, that the aforesaid husband and wife do give to the said Community of the Company of Jesus of this City one-half of a cattle ranch named Buenavista, which is two leagues distant from this City, on the borders of the town of Santa*

[1] Jose Rizal*, El Filibusterismo* trans. Harold Augenbraum (New York: Penguin Books, 2011), 23.

"Inspired by God, at that very moment, the Chinaman invoked St. Nicholas and in an instant the crocodile turned to stone. The old ones say that in their time they could still easily recognize the monster in the pieces of rock that remained. As for me, I can assure you I can clearly, discern his head, and to judge by that, the monster must have been huge."

> *Ana and the Hermitage of Our Lady of Guadalupe, along the banks of the Pasig River, together with the other things that shall hereinafter be declared."*[2]
>
> —*Horacio de la Costa*

> *"Mother of gods and men, of stars and ants, of maize and maguey, Tonantzin/Guadalupe was the answer of the imagination to the state of orphanage in which the conquest left the Indians."*[3]
>
> —*Octavio Paz*

In August 20, 1968, Horacio de la Costa, SJ delivered an address to the Rotary Club of Makati entitled "The Meaning of Makati," which begins thus: "Looking over the beautiful color photographs of tall office buildings, landscaped playgrounds, busy shopping complexes, and attractive homes which accompanied the article, and thinking of the fantastic amount of money that all this represents, I was suddenly and most forcibly reminded that Makati originally belonged to the Jesuits." [4] The article narrates the development of Makati, especially at that time it passed ownership to the *Compania de Jesus*. In the central business district is a street named after the eminent historian, who is also the first Filipino President of the Ateneo de Manila

[2] Horacio de la Costa, "The Meaning of Makati." Address to Makati Rotary, 20 August 1968; cf. *Selected Essays on the Filipino and His Problems Today*, ed. Roberto Paterno (Manila: 2B3C Foundation, 2002), 182–189.

[3] Octavio Paz, "Prefacio: Entre Orfandad y Legitimidad" in *El ogrofilantropico; historia y politica 1971-1978* (Mexico,1979):13–14; 24.

[4] de la Costa, "The Meaning of Makati,"182–89.

University. His lecture probably stands as the most authoritative history of Makati, based on documents and solid historical methodology. But Fr. De la Costa's piece was not entitled "A Short History of Makati;" rather, it was "The Meaning of Makati."

The question of the meaning of a particular city, such as Makati, is one that needs to be asked. It is a question that is strange as it is necessary. Often, we ask, what the meaning of a word is, or what the meaning of life is, but we do not ask the meaning of a particular city. At the very least, Fr. De la Costa might have been asking what the import of the historical narrative of Makati is as a city: "What reflections come to mind as we contemplate this long and illustrious history? We might, perhaps, begin by reflecting on what moved Don Pedro de Brito to dispose of his property in the way he did. It is obvious that he wanted his property to be of service to people—to redound to the benefit not only of himself, its owner, but of others also, especially those less fortunate than he."[5]

Following the footsteps of Fr. De la Costa, this paper attempts to understand "the meaning of Makati" through two of the city's barangays, Guadalupe Viejo and Guadalupe Nuevo.[6] The history of the Guadalupe barangays of Makati

[5] de la Costa, "The Meaning of Makati," 182-89.

[6] *Guadalupe Viejo* is a district of Makati City located at the Northeast side of Makati City, contigious to the Pasig River while *Guadalupe Nuevo*is is located further East of *Guadalupe Viejo.*

is part and parcel of the history of Makati—a story that is, at once, distressing and triumphant. It is distressing because of the irreparable loss of the original image of the Black Madonna; triumphant, because Guadalupe is part of the story of how a little town in the suburbs of Manila has become the business capital of the Philippines.

Figure 1. Image at National Shrine of Our Lady Guadalupe, Makati. *Photograph taken by Jovino de Guzman Miroy (2018).*

Discontinuity in Guadalupe Viejo

Discontinuity marks the history of Guadalupe Viejo. The original image of the Virgin of Guadalupe—the Black Madonna from Extremadura—which drew people to this *barrio* or *sitio* (now called barangay) has been lost. The original image first disappeared when it was destroyed in the church's rubble after an earthquake in 1880. Soon after, a replica was made by local artisans, the San Pedro brothers. That image would then be lost in the attack of the Katipuneros during the Philippine Revolution of 1899. Pedro Galende ruefully writes, "Together with thousands of books, manuscripts, and copies of *Flora de Filipinas* were lost forever."[7] In this one line, we see the whole story of Guadalupe Viejo. The author could perhaps be implying that what was lost in the attack of 1899 was an entire culture that the Augustinians had built in the idyll of Guadalupe, in this remote *sitio* that was called *Sampiro de Makati.*

But there is another side to this story. Pedro Galende continues that the site was "a haunted ruin for a long time."[8] It was used by the Japanese forces as a garrison and headquarters and was quarried for stone to rebuild the

[7] Pedro Galende, O.S.A., *Angels in Stones: Architecture of Augustinian Churches in the Philippines*, 34. Cf. also Rodolfo M. Arreza, O.S.A., *The Guadalupe Shrine* (Iloilo City: Research and Development Center, University of San Agustin, 1991.) More valuable for its pictorial record, this book, however, confuses the Guadalupe image in the Augustinian church with the one of Mexico.

[8] Ibid.

Manila Cathedral. The present structure of the church of Nuestra Señora de Gracia (or the Guadalupe Church) was restored in 1970 when Cardinal Rufino Santos invited the Augustinians back to their old site in Makati. The destruction and restoration of this church is a staggering tale if you pause to think about it.

The story of the Virgin of Guadalupe began in the Middle Ages at the beginning of the fourteenth century, when the lore of a sculpture by St. Luke of the Mother of Christ was said to have been found by a herdsman in Extremadura, an autonomous community in the Iberian Peninsula. Western historians did not emphasize the "*morena*" or dark features of the image but they would dwell instead on "the lore." This image of a seated Madonna carrying a child achieved royal patronage (starting with Alfonso XI), and thus attained popularity all throughout the Spanish Empire. Even more so, conquistadors and colonists took pilgrimages to Extremadura and used her as a patron of their voyages. According to legend, even the voyage of Legaspi was under the auspices of the Virgin of Guadalupe of Extremadura and the image that was found in Cebu town of Guadalupe is this same self- image.[9] The relationship of this image of the Virgin, known as the Spanish Guadalupe and aptly understood in Makati as "Guadalupe Viejo/a" to the

[9] Resil Mojares, "Stalking the Virgin," in *Waiting for Mariang Makiling: Essays in Philippine Cultural History* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2002), 145.

Mexican Guadalupe or Guadalupe Nuevo/a, is also significant.

The trajectory of the spread of her devotion in the Philippines followed the one in Spain and Latin America. It was in the seventeenth century that her cult grew throughout the empire, in the seventeenth century, when the Spanish monarchy visited her shrine and copies of the statue were made. It is not clear from the sources whether the reproductions were also made of black wood.[10] But it can be surmised that it was at least of dark wood. Meanwhile, in the Philippines, Captain Pedro Navarrete and his wife Dona Agustina Morales, patrons from Extremadura, petitioned the Augustinians, who built "an *ermita*" on the promontory that had a stunning view of the province of Tondo and Manila Bay in 1601, to change the titular head of their new church to the Virgin of Guadalupe in 1603. Together with the church was a community house (also called a monastery or *casa de comunidad*), which gave way for the cult of the Virgin of Guadalupe to grow among Manileños. The final home of the Virgin of Guadalupe became "the devotion house most frequented in the islands."[11]

The cult spread in relation to the galleon trade, or the Manila–Acapulco trade. Here lies one other lost site of the relationship between Mexico and the Philippines: "Devotees

[10] David A. Brading, *Mexican Phoenix: Our Lady of Guadalupe: Image and Tradition Across Five Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 37.

[11] Galende, *Angels in Stones*, 34.

from Spain and Mexico thronged into the sanctuary of Guadalupe in Makati to pay their respects to the Lady and to thank her for a peaceful trip."[12] The popularity (among colonists) of this site, which was a global meeting point, is unmentioned in the history of Makati.[13] How popular was it, and how did this religious devotion impact the production of space? "It became such a frequent courtesy that the authorities were forced to put up a landing dock at the foot of the hill by the river for the pilgrims to climb up to the top."[14] The Local Tourism Board of Makati would still have to mark the spot where this landing dock used to be. One would imagine that there were stairs (*escalinita*) from the river where the trading class from Spain and Mexico climbed. Galende also mentions "wooden houses for the pilgrims."[15] By the eighteenth century, the site was a favorite meeting place of the colony's top officials.

The religious and global atmosphere on this side of Makati at this time must have been exhilarating. The celebration of the Feast of Our Lady Guadalupe is a fiesta—now celebrated in Spain on September 8—that included a pontifical mass and procession with the most beautifully decorated image of Our Lady. One noticeable detail around Old Makati are the numerous *andas* (platforms or floats

[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid.

carrying religious figures) that line the streets. They also had "*mongigangas*" or masquerading dancers along the streets composed of "mestizos, sangleys, and natives."[16] There were also bullfights held during the fiesta, indicating that the area was a colonial site. With these touches of what appears to be Hispanic influences, we can ask whether those who settled were from Acapulco or from Spain.

Aside from the touches of Spain in the fiesta, the Chinese were also prevalent. There are two possible explanations for the Chinese presence in the celebrations: the first is that according to the rendition of the pious victorious, the insurrection of the Chinese was quelled by Governor Sebastian Hurtado de Corcuera through the intercession of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Not surprisingly, the Chinese in Manila made this church their sanctuary. The second possible explanation is in connection with Saint Nicholas of Tolentino, whose image was also enshrined in the Guadalupe Church to this day. What does Nicholas of Tolentino have to do with the Guadalupe church?

In a portion of *El Filibusterismo,* which tells the legends of the Pasig, Jose Rizal depicts a Chinese man who was saved by Nicholas of Tolentino from a crocodile. This man invoked St. Nicholas, who turned the crocodile into a rock. Perhaps there was, or is, a rock in the Pasig River in the shape of a crocodile, as recounted in Rizal's second novel,

[16] Gallende, *Angels in Stones,* 34.

around which a legend grew. According to Galende, however, the man was saved from the storm and not from the crocodile. Regardless of the truth behind this crocodile rock, the Chinese have flocked to Guadalupe Church since the Spanish times. As in the case of Chinese temples, they would climb up the stairs of the Guadalupe Church to offer a thick red candle. The understanding is that this is the main temple of San Nicholas de Tolentino, whose image was kept side by side with Confucius in Chinese homes.

The popularity of this site among the Chinese is also not mentioned in the history of Makati. It is not unknown that many of the grand houses by the river in Makati (and in Pasig) belong to Chinese families. What we see here is that on this site of the Guadalupe Viejo is the confluence of colonists, Chinese, friars, and natives. The church, through the overarching framework of "devotion," has spawned a space for inclusion, globality, and multiculturalism. The celebration of the feast of San Nicholas is actually described as "an explosion of Christian fervor and pagan rituals,"[17] as it is marked by a fluvial parade, fireworks, and a burning of the royal castle. It must have been a most marvelous sight to behold.

In 1853, this sitio became a *domus studiorum* (or a center for studies) to accommodate excess students from Manila. This would have presaged the building of seminaries on this

[17] Gallende, *Angels in Stones,* 34.

side of town. This house of studies also became an orphanage (an *asilo*). Would we dare ask why? Here is a crevice in the historical narrative, which we dare not speak of. This house of studies also became an *Escuela de artes y oficios*,[18] best translated as "School of Arts and Trades." One must note that at this time the ties with Mexico were cut due to the Mexican Independence movement (1810) and the opening of the Suez Canal (1869). Significantly, according to Galende, local artisans became master artists with the School of Arts. These masters are the famous San Pedro brothers, Melchor and Gaspar, who made the replica of the image of Guadalupe that was lost during the British Occupation. There is also mention of a printing press. Perhaps the Renaissance came quite late to this part of the world; or these could be a part of efforts to modernize, as the empire gasps its dying breath.

Fifty years later, the Philippine Revolution itself would ensue, leaving the site in ruins. As the description in one of the photographs of the ruin puts it: "it is unmourned and forsaken."[19] Was the sacking of the pilgrimage site symbolic of the defeat of the Colonial presence as well? The place of Makati in the Philippine Revolution has not yet been fully documented, despite the aggressing monument of Pio del Pilar on Makati Avenue.

[18] Gallende, *Angels in Stones,* 37.
[19] Ibid.

Let us momentarily reminisce the sights and sounds of Guadalupe Viejo when the *naos* (vessels) came with church bells ringing and people rejoicing at the sound of blessings. Money must have poured in, as the alms box earned a nickname: "*Alcancia*." The devotion must have gained a reputation for income generation as it did in other parts of the empire. There is a story of an old woman of Bulacan, who, together with a dozen "*dalagas,*" touted as priestesses roamed the streets begging for contributions in the name of the Virgin of Guadalupe of Makati. What is strange, or probably not so strange, is that similar instances happened in Mexico prompting the king to forbid the begging for alms in the name of the Virgin of Guadalupe.[20] Such was the extent of the popularity of the devotion to the "Virgin of Guadalupe Vieja." This popularity explains why we have a Virgin of *Guadalupe nueva.* The apparition of the Virgin in Tepeyac is endemic to Tepeyac, Mexico City. The story is completely different from the one in Spain and only the creole clergy called her Guadalupe possibly to create a connection and continuity to the one in Extremadura, whose popularity was such that she became a symbol of colonization in the Philippines.[21]

[20] Brading, *Mexican Phoenix*, 323.
[21] Ibid., 77.

Figure 2. Façade of Nuestra Señora de Gracia Church, Guadalupe Viejo. *Photograph taken by Jovino de Guzman Miroy (2018).*

Continuity in Guadalupe Nuevo

Contemporary historians think that the Virgin of Guadalupe in Tepeyac is a "trace" of the Aztec devotion to Tonantzin, a mother goddess. The organic and natural side of the devotion to the Guadalupe Virgins continues even in the Philippines. Guadalupe, meaning "river of wolves," was a form of Gothicism that was not lost to the architect who built the shrine in Makati. The style of the old church in Makati is Neo-Romanesque-Gothic, because of the massive

buttresses that create a verticality.[22] The one in Tepeyac, however, has nothing to do with the river, but with mountains and hills. We see both elements of the river and the hills in the one in Makati, which sits on a promontory overlooking the Pasig. Both the legend of the storm and the crocodile, from which the anonymous Chinese man was saved, attests to the animistic roots of the devotion.

The proximity to the river is probably one of the reasons why, in 1904, the American colonists built Fort William McKinley. "The land which Fort McKinley occupies was formerly part of La Hacienda Maricaban and purchased by the United States Government in the early part of 1902, at a cost of $64,675 in gold. It is situated on the right bank of the Pasig River overlooking the Laguna de Bay, and affords a most entrancing view of these two waters, surrounding country, and in the distance the mountains of the provinces of Rizal and Batangas."[23] Undocumented histories of the Guadalupe Nuevo Barangay indicate remnants of army camps as a plausible explanation for the settlement on this side of Makati. The growth of barangays in the shadow of the camp is unmentioned in the history of Makati, unlike the case of the Church of Guadalupe Viejo where trading ports led to its original settlement in Guadalupe by the river. The

[22] Galende, *Angels in Stone*, 40.

[23] Captain William E. Horton, US Army Quartermaster; Mr. Harry Alvin, Supervising Architect, "Construction of Fort William McKinley, Manila PI," *The Far Eastern Review* (October 1905): 125–129, American Historical Collection.

newer settlement on the South grew mainly because of the camp. This is the side of the city called Guadalupe Nuevo, the Guadalupe named after the image on the tilma of the Aztec Juan Diego.

How did it happen that this devotion in Makati had a direct link to the Mexican Guadalupe? We can offer three explanations, the first being the most logical. Guadalupe Nuevo, as the whole of the central business district, possesses the most dominant American presence. A not so articulated identity of Makati is its association with the Katipunan and the revolution. As the history of the Guadalupe Shrine dictates, there was a major victory in Guadalupe for the revolutionary side, the restoration of which in 1970 was symbolic.

Second, not only did the Katipuneros have a presence in Makati; so too did the Americans. The Americans built their camp on this side of town (which is not considered part of the San Pedro Hacienda but of the Hacienda Maricaban) mainly because of its proximity to the river, lake, and the city of Manila. Its location opened an opportunity to create a connection and continuity with the Mexican Guadalupe.

The third possible explanation: at this time the devotion to the Mexican Guadalupe grew amongst Catholics, especially among those who went to Mexico. The apparition story in Tepeyac dates back as far as 1531, ten years after the official date of Ferdinand Magellan's arrival in 1521. The Church of the Virgin of Guadalupe in Makati was built only

in 1951. What accounts for this gap of four centuries? As we have seen, the cult of the Spanish Guadalupe is the one popularly propagated in the entire empire. Furthermore, historians are saying that there was a conscious silence on the one in Tepeyac. The priest Tomas De Torquemada, for example, writes about the temple of Tonantzin but does not mention the apparition. Although he lived in the Franciscan convent at Tlatelco, which is proximate to the chapel of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Tepeyac, he does not make "the slightest reference to the image and its cult."[24]

If the colonial church seemed to have been silent—to say the least—about the Tepeyac events, then how did the devotion to the Mexican Guadalupe start in the Philippines? It would only be logical to assume that the devotion to the Mexican Guadalupe developed only after the end of the devotion to the Extremadura Guadalupe in Spain. According to a story that is unverified by documents, it was a certain Monsignor Guglielmo Piani who lobbied for the Virgin of Guadalupe to become patroness of the Philippines.[25] Piani spent some time in Mexico (1912–1922) where he was Provincial of the Salesians and Auxiliary Bishop of Puebla itself. In 1922, however, he became

[24] Brading, *Mexican Phoenix*, 43.

[25] "Historical Roots of the Devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe in the Philippines," Unpublished, material provided at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Makati); cf. also Msgr. Salvador r. Jose, *Novena in Honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe* (Pasay City: Paulines Publishing House, 2005).

Apostolic Delegate to Manila and Archbishop of Drama.[26] It is strange that the making of the Virgin of Guadalupe as patroness of the Philippines is not listed as one of his accomplishments. There is also an undocumented claim that Paul XI issued a Bull in 1935, which made the Virgin of Guadalupe Principal Patroness of the Philippine Islands.[27] None of the other histories of the Mexican Guadalupe mention this detail. Further research would have to be done to show a link to the American church, as well as to Catholics who stayed in Fort McKinley and the spread of the devotion.

Could one assert that it is impossible that Mons. Piani brought the devotion to Manila, which grew especially in a town called Guadalupe in Makati? Not surprisingly, because of the American camp, Makati was one of the towns hit the hardest during the war with the Japanese. It was from the ruins of war that Makati grew.

At this point, the plot thickens. Emerging from the war, Makati assumed an identity beyond the camp. How did the erstwhile airport (Nielsen Tower) become the skyscraper capital of the Philippines? According to Ayala historians, it was in 1949 that the development of Forbes Park commenced.[28] Two years later, the Church of Guadalupe

[26] *Resumen Biografico*, Mons. Guillermo Piani, Archdiocesan Archives Manila

[27] Cf. *Historical Roots*, 6.

[28] *Impacts of the Land Development in Makati A Report of the Research Department* (Filipinas Foundation, Inc., August 30, 1983), 29.

was built. Sadly, the architecture of the Guadalupe Nuevo church is ill-conceived. From my philosophical perspective, the style can only be called "*hindi maintindihan* (unintelligible)," as it epitomizes an "absurd" or "meaningless" architectural style. Located at the famous Orense Street, the shadow of Forbes Park, the MMDA Building, and the billboards of EDSA loom over the Church of Guadalupe. It would not be an exaggeration to say that it was a disgrace to the cult of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Flanked by a Guadalupe Catholic School and fronted by a covered parking lot, the church is totally indiscernible as sacred space. Apart from the masterfully crafted stained glass windows, the only other saving grace is a street next to it called, "*Camino de la fe*." The sight of elderly women praying in front of the image—which according to stories is supposed to have come from Mexico—is reminiscent of the people of Tepeyac.

Three other significant events mark the devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe in the Philippines: On November 13, 2001 the celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe was declared an Obligatory Memorial by the Ministry of Liturgical Affairs of the Archdiocese of Manila, effectively making the devotion widespread throughout the whole of the Philippine church. The church of Guadalupe Nuevo

became the Archdiocesan Shrine on August 15, 2002 and was also declared Patroness of Pro-Life Movement.[29]

Is our direct link to the Mexican Guadalupe the Italian Guglielmo Piani who witnessed the anticlericalism in Mexico at the turn of the twentieth century? Or are they the unnamed Mexican-Americans who stayed in the barracks of Fort McKinley? Or are they the ghosts of native Mexicans or descendants of those who settled in Guadalupe brought by the naos from Acapulco?

Guadalupe Devotion and Mexican Intellectual History

The brief history of the devotion to the Mexican Guadalupe, starting with what is believed to be the declaration of her as Co-Patroness of the Philippines in 1933, is counter-pointed by the long history of the devotion in Mexico. We are not going to rehearse that long history in this paper, which, for some, should really begin with the cult of Tonantzin (Our Mother) in Tepeyac.[30] Instead, let us delineate the relationship of the devotion to the development of thought in Mexico. In the process of showing the intellectual issues attached to the devotion we hope to show the importance of rekindling the bonds with Mexico.

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[29] *Historical Roots*, 6.

[30] Cf. for example, Donald V. Kurtz, "The Virgin of Guadalupe and the Politics of Becoming Human," *Journal of Anthropological Research* 38, No. 2 (Summer, 1982): 194–210.

The relationship between the devotion of the Virgin of Guadalupe and philosophy can be enumerated as follows: the relationship between the devotion to medieval thought, especially medieval theology, the relationship between the devotion and national identity, and the relationship between the devotion and the ideal of historicity.[31]

The starting point of an intellectual analysis of the Guadalupan devotion is the text written by Miguel Sanchez (1596–1674), entitled "*Imagen de la Virgen María, Madre de Dios de Guadalupe: Milagrosamente aparecida en la ciudad de México: Celebrada en su historia, con la profecía del capítulo doce del Apocalipsis* (Image of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God of Guadalupe: Miraculously appeared in the City of Mexico: Celebrated in Her History, with the Prophecy of Chapter Twelve of the Apocalypse)." Sanchez was a diocesan priest, who, despite his reputation for learning, failed to secure a teaching appointment at the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico City. Scholarship on Sanchez' '*Imagen de la Virgen Maria*' creates an intriguing character to the historian of ideas, especially to those who focus on Medieval Studies. "Even a cursory reading of Sanchez's work reveals his admiration and extensive study of Augustine and other Fathers of the early church."[32] In the work, there are references to Aristotle, Aquinas, Ambrose, Jerome,

[31] Timothy Matovina, "Theologies of Guadalupe: From the Spanish Colonial Era to John Paul II," *Theological Studies* 70 (2009).

[32] Matovani, "Theologies of Guadalupe," 66.

Tertullian, John Chrysostom, Cyprian, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzen, and Clement of Alexandria. More than two dozen references to Augustine, however, have been counted. Scholars have described Sanchez' theology as Augustinian, mainly because of his view of history: "Consistent with an Augustinian theology of history that posits a divine plan and purpose working through human events and even human frailty and failings, Sánchez lauds the conquest as a providential occurrence that defeated Satan and idolatry and paved the way for the destined appearance of Mary of Guadalupe and her pivotal role for the establishment of the church in Mexico."[33] There are two aspects in Sanchez' Guadalupan theology. The first is his Eurocentrism—the apparition and consequent devotion to the Virgin are part of the conquest of the New World, which is necessary to save the natives from heathenism. The other aspect is that the apparition is comparable to divine election through Moses of the Israelites to whom the Ark of the Covenant is entrusted. Most notable in this text is the negative way that Sanchez puts the pre-Christian Mexican society and thus the necessity for them to be baptized and reared in the Christian ways of the Colonizers. Significant here is the connection between medieval thought found in Augustine's account of the apocalyptic vision of the woman

[33] Matovani, "Theologies of Guadalupe," 66.

clothed with a sun and the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The connection to Medieval Studies does not stop here. In 1986, Edmundo O'Gorman (1906–1995) published his "Banishment of Shadows."[34] There, he mentioned a book by Marcel Bataillon entitled "*Erasmus and Spain*," published in 1937.[35] The book asserted that "Zumarraga and many of the early Franciscans in New Spain were strongly influenced by Erasmus and his critique of popular religion, and not [the] least by his questioning of miracle-mongering, pilgrimages and veneration of images."[36] Not surprisingly, there were Counter-reformers in New Spain, who "renewed the medieval devotion to images and questioned reliance on individual inspiration or any longing for evangelical simplicity of the primitive church."[37] This detail is remarkable for the student of Medieval thought, because clearly the subject matter of devotions, images, and pilgrimages is indeed a subject matter that has been discoursed upon by theologians and philosophers since the time of the Iconoclasts.

What is at stake, however, is the idea of "reform." Bataillon's thesis of Erasmus' connection with Spain and his

[34] Edmundo O'Gorman, *Destierro de sombras: luz en el origen de la imagen y culto de Nuestra senora de Guadalupe del Tepeyac* (Mexico, 1986).

[35] Marcel Bataillon, *Erasmo y Espana*, trans. By Antonio Alatorre, 2 vols. (Mexico, 1950).

[36] Brading, *Mexican Phoenix*, 327.

[37] Ibid.

influence among the Franciscans in Spain tells us of the vibrancy of the intellectual life at the time of conquest of the New World. The historian of ideas is hard pressed to ask how this translates to the colony in Manila. To what extent did the spirit of Reformation imbue the evangelization in Manila, not to mention the spirituality of the "faithful" in Intramuros?

At the very least, however, we can state that "the devotions" to images, the saints, and the practice of pilgrimage had their roots in the Middle Ages. They were understood as counterpoints to a modern spirituality that harked back to the primitive which was simpler and individualist. This "inward turn" of the Reform's formula of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ would lead to the withdrawal of religion from the public sphere, the distinction and separation between church and state, and the secularization of laws. It is definitely exhilarating to discover a relationship with the questions of Medieval thought at the beginning of the history of the Guadalupe devotion.

A second set of philosophical questions is raised in another important phase in the development of the Devotion. This second phase is not without roots in Sanchez' synthesis of the Guadalupan event. From there, the Criollan clergy developed "nationalist sentiments rooted in Guadalupe's celestial election of their homeland."[38] The

[38] Matovina, "Theologies of Guadalupe," 73.

connection between the Guadalupe devotion and the national identity of Mexico is perhaps the most difficult to analyze philosophically. There are two aspects of this "idea." The first stems from the theology of selection that the apparition has given to the land of Mexico. From the start, people have interpreted the apparition as a special favor given to New Spain, a signal of the Mexicans' special place in the "history of salvation." They have interpreted the apparition as God bestowing on them the same status as "the chosen people of God."

The other side of this is that it obviates dependence on Spain with regard to religion, for in Mexico, it is believed that God has decided to reveal himself directly through the tilma of Juan Diego. From here, the idea of independence from Spain would not be distantly deduced. The main figure here is Miguel Hidalgo, a criollo priest and the father of Mexican independence who would detach the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe from the sacred altars and on to the banner of Independence. According to Jacques Lafaye Miguel Sánchez, Hidalgo is "the true founder of the Mexican *patria,* for on the exegetic bases which he constructed in the mid-17th century that *patria* would flower until she won her political independence under the banner of Guadalupe. From the day the Mexicans began to regard themselves as a chosen people, they were potentially

liberated from Spanish tutelage."[39] A Guadalupan analysis of Mexican independence would assert that the ideas of nationhood and independence came from the events in Tepeyac, and more precisely, from the image on the tilma of Juan Diego itself, drawn with flowers by God himself.

But as studies of the development of this idea have done, what is more important to account is the career of this idea after Mexican independence, until the Mexican Civil War in the early twentieth century. After Agustin Iturbide's short-lived empire, Mexico became a federal republic. At this point, so-called Liberal politicians wanted to appropriate ecclesiastical wealth for the state. "In successive blows, the radical government expropriated all Church property, stripped the clergy of their legal privilege, dissolved the monasteries, secularized education, and finally separated Church and State."[40] This was just the beginning of Liberal reforms in Mexican society. By 1910, a massive anti-clericalism was enforced: "Bishops were expelled, priests persecuted, churches confiscated."

In 1926, the Catholics finally fought back, initiating the civil war: "Rebel banners consisted of the figure of Guadalupe, under which was inscribed the slogan, *Viva Cristo Rey.*"[41] Only at this time does the cult of Juan Diego

[39] Matovina, "Theologies of Guadalupe," 74. Cf. Jacques Lafaye, *Quetzalcoatl and Guadalupe: The Formation of Mexican National Consciousness, 1531–1813,* trans. Benjamin Keen (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1976).

[40] Brading, *Mexican Phoenix*, 8.

[41] Ibid., 10.

commence which culminates not only with the reconciliation of the State and Church, but the erection of the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe with a government subsidy in 1976 and with the canonization of Juan Diego in the early twenty-first century.

The relationship between Liberalism and the Church would probably intrigue Filipinos the most. Did the Liberals destroy the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe? According to Ignacio Manuel Altamirano, "during the First Republic all presidents and generals had entered the sanctuary at Tepeyac to honour Mexico's patron. Even the Liberals of the Reform, although prevented from entering the Church by the separation of Church and the State, had respected the shrine and her cult."[42] This is mainly because the image is identified with the flag, with the Mexican identity equated with the Virgin of Guadalupe.[43]

The fusion of Mexican identity with Guadalupe is probably the most basic discontinuity of the cult in the Philippines with that of Mexico. In Mexico, the devotion has attained not only identification with the community of Tepeyac but the national community of Mexico, and even Mexicans all over the world, especially the United States.[44]As

[42] Brading, *Mexican Phoenix*, 8.

[43] Eric R. Wolf, "The Virgin of Guadalupe: A Mexican National Symbol," *The Journal of American Folklore* 71, No. 279, (Jan. –Mar. 1958): 34–39.

[44] Cf., Macarena Gomez-Barrios and Clara Irazabal, "Transnational Meanings of La Virgen de Guadalupe: Religiosity," *Culture and Religion* 10, No. 3

the poet Octavio Paz stated: "after two centuries of experiment and failure, the Mexican people only believe in the Virgin of Guadalupe and the National Lottery."[45] To say the least, the Mexican devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe does not have the mark of invisibility which is found in the Makati devotion, where her shrine rates poorly as a sacred space.

The third set of philosophical questions deriving from the devotion of Guadalupe has to do with the idea of the historicity of the devotion. Stafford Poole has written extensively on the historical authenticity of the apparition and the person of Juan Diego.[46] While Liberals might accept the use of the Virgin of Guadalupe as a national symbol, they probably have doubted the authenticity of the image, the apparition itself, and the sanctity of Juan Diego. Simply put, the question he was asking is: "Is the apparition in Tepeyac historically authentic?" But this question is not just a question of history, but of the philosophy of religion. Starting with Hume, philosophers have already cast doubt on miracles asserting the impossibility of proving them rationally. To this, the Kierkegaardian would proffer the idea of belief as a "leap" from the absence of proof.

(November 2009): 339–357; Valentina Napolitano, "The Virgin of Guadalupe: A Nexus of Affect," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N.S.)* 15: 96–112.

[45] Brading, *Mexican Phoenix*, 330.

[46] Stafford Poole, C.M., *The Guadalupan Controversies in Mexico* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006); *Our Lady of Guadalupe the Origins and Sources of a Mexican National Symbol, 1531-1797* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1995).

Is religious belief in our times as simple as that? "Extending the implications of the historicity debate to the works of commentators like some liberation theologians, Poole asserts that without documented historical evidence about the apparitions the symbolism [of Guadalupe] loses any objectivity it may have had and is at the mercy of propagandists and special interests."[47] The development of the cult of the Mexican Guadalupe has led her to be regarded as a "master symbol," both in the sense that the cult was used to control the colony as well as to assert nationalism, independence, and secularity.[48]

For Poole, a Vincentian priest, the lack of objectivity in her authenticity has made her vulnerable to ideological appropriation. This would lead us to ask, how do we begin to authenticate the historicity of the cult of the Virgin of Guadalupe? This has been the subject of much Guadalupan scholarship in the last fifty years.

The search goes on for the analysis of documents pertinent to the events in Tepeyac. Here we must necessarily mention the *Nican Mopohua*, a text written in Nahuatl, which means "here is recounted."[49] This is considered the

[47] Matovani, "Theologies of Guadalupe," 63–64.

[48] Jeanette Faurot Peterson, "The Virgin of Guadalupe: Symbol of Conquest or Liberation?." *Art Journal* 51, No. 4, Latin American Art. (Winter, 1992): 39–47; cf. also, Luis Eugenio Espinosa Gonzalez , "La Gestacion de un Mito: El Potencial Politico de Maria de Guadalupe,"*Voces – Diálogo Misionero Contemporáneo,* 2009, Issue 33: 27–43.

[49] Cf. *Nicanmophua*, English translation in Virgil Elizondo, *Guadalupe Mother of the New Creation* (New York: Orbis Books, 1997), 5–24.

foundational text of the Guadalupan tradition. In connection with the historicity of the events is the lack of evidence for the existence of Juan Diego, prompting protests against his canonization. Currently, historians agree that there is only evidence for the existence of an Indian called Juan, who lived close to Tepeyac and was renowned for his service at the sanctuary there.[50] As is often the case, much of religious faith lacks evidence, and the Guadalupan tradition gives fodder to the assertion that much of religious faith is social construction and modes of control.

The question of historicity, however, is itself a social construct, as the historian Brading declares: "In effect, the current controversy which surrounds the image derives from a nineteenth-century concern with 'historicity' and is animated on both sides of the debate by a latter-day positivism which impels apparitionists to insist on 'the Guadalupan Fact,' and their opponents to hint at forgery and condemn error."[51] Ultimately, the question is not just about the historical authenticity of the apparition narrative, of the tilma, and the sanctity of Juan Diego.

The question is philosophical, and involves the meaning of belief, religious faith, and its relationship with institutional religion. Crudely put: "Should I believe something that has not been proven by historical documentation? Should I

[50] Brading, *Mexican Phoenix*, 367.
[51] Ibid., 361.

believe anything offered by my religious tradition, even if they do not have scientific or objective evidence?" These questions cannot be answered with a simple yes or no, for how much evidence is there for the core belief of Christians that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God? Does belief require objective evidence? How does the thinking believer, conscious of the lack of evidence, address the "faith" of millions of devotees in Tepeyac?

What we have attempted to do in this narration of the history of Makati's Guadalupe is show that the devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe is not without intellectual—i.e., historical, philosophical, and theological—significance. This is precisely the point of philosophical reflection: that we become conscious of religious and social practices, so as to shed critical light on them, perhaps to ask whether to abandon or to deepen them.

Conclusion

Let us end with an aporia*,* a difficulty or doubt (*duda*), for the history of ideas always leads to these difficulties that make us wonder. According to Johannes Menesius de Silva [1431–1482] (aka Blessed Amadeus of Portugal), in his *New Apocalypse*, the Blessed Virgin is "present" in his images. Furthermore, Jesuit Guadalupan apologists—and there are many—have understood the image in a Eucharistic mode; that is, "in the image on the tilma, the flowers of Tepeyac have been transformed into the paint and color and

transfigured into the heavenly likeness of the Virgin."[52] The tilma bears the divine presence through the painting drawn by the hand of God.

Since the Council of Trent, however, Catholics have been taught that sacred images are not talismans that conserve any form of divine power. They merely represent part of the salvation narrative. The history of religions, however, has shown that there are "cult images" which differ from those that merely represent a part of a sacred story. "To this day, there are a select number of images, mainly, but not invariably, of the Virgin, which attract pilgrims, figures as patrons of cities, provinces and nations; and elicit fervent devotion. In a word, they possess a charisma and a presence which exert a power over the faithful."[53] The scholar would ask and provide suspicion on these phenomena and provide a cultural interpretation. But perhaps the humanistic and philosophical question is, "Can a cultural interpretation be sufficient to explain what happens in Guadalupe, in Quiapo, in Antipolo?" *C'est ca la question principal* (This is the main concern).

To recall the philosophical intent of Fr. De la Costa's address on Makati, "What reflections come to mind as we contemplate this long and illustrious history?" Perhaps, however, we need to continue the work of seriously writing

[52] Brading, *Mexican Phoenix*, 365.
[53] Ibid.

the history of Makati, which is inclusive of the narrative of time-worn sites, especially the Guadalupe towns. This narrative may help clarify what Fr. De la Costa considered as Makati's role in building a more just society. The inclusion of the histories of the two Guadalupe barangays may indicate this interconnection between the history of Makati and the narrative of the history of religions.[54] The narrative of Makati cannot be disconnected from the intellectual issues that imbue the development of thought arising from the Guadalupan theologies; issues that tell us of a less than facile bond that the people of Guadalupe Makati doubtless have with the cult of Tonantzin, the fiction of the Aztec San Juan Diego, and the vision of the Virgin painted with the flowers of Tepeyac.

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[54] Another possible locus of investigation is the cursus of the images of Guadalupe in the Philippines, cf. Maríadel Consuelo Maquívar, "Arte y Evangelizacion," *Voces – DiálogoMisioneroContemporáneo.* 2009, Issue 33: 13–25.

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